

member of my Cabinet, and they will make him a trusted friend to America's farmers and ranchers.

Ed's passion for agriculture has deep roots. His maternal grandparents were Danish immigrants who worked as farmers on the plains of North Dakota. Ed has always kept their story close to his heart. And they'd be proud to see their grandson rise to become our Nation's top agriculture official.

In his new job, Ed will carry on the work of another fine public servant, Mike Johanns. Mike became Secretary of Agriculture at the beginning of my second term. During his time in office, he helped open new markets for trade, promoted renewable fuels and conservation, and provided timely assistance to our farmers and ranchers devastated by natural disasters. Mike leaves a legacy of integrity and dedication. And Laura and I wish Mike and his wife Stephanie all the best on their return to Nebraska.

I also thank my friend Deputy Secretary of Agriculture Chuck Conner for serving as Acting Secretary during this time of transition. Chuck grew up on a family farm in Indiana. He has a deep knowledge of agricultural issues. He's done an outstanding job. Appreciate the fact that you'll remain as Acting Secretary until the Senate confirms Ed as Mike Johanns's permanent replacement. And thank you for joining us today.

Following Mike is not going to be easy, but Ed Schafer is up to the challenge. With Ed's leadership, we will work with Congress to pass a farm bill that provides farmers with a safety net, protects our lands and the environment, and spends Federal tax dollars wisely. Ed will also join other members of my administration to continue leveling the playing field for America's farm products by concluding the Doha round of trade negotiations. And he and I will continue to work hard to open up new markets for American beef.

As Ed takes on these new challenges, he will rely on the support of his caring family. Ed is blessed with a wonderful wife, Nancy, who came from North Dakota today. He is also blessed with four children and eight grandchildren. Their love will give Ed the strength to serve our country in his new capacity.

I urge the Senate to swiftly confirm Ed Schafer as the 29th Secretary of Agriculture. I look forward to having this good and decent man as a member of my Cabinet. Congratulations.

[At this point, Secretary-designate Schafer made brief remarks.]

The President. Thank you, sir. Good job.

NOTE: The President spoke at 2:05 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Secretary-designate Schafer.

Remarks to the White House Press Pool and an Exchange With Reporters November 1, 2007

The President. Thanks. I wanted to highlight the speech I'm giving today to Heritage. I'm concerned that there are some who have lost sight of the fact that we're at war with extremists and radicals who want to attack us again. Part of the speech

is to remind people that even though we haven't been attacked since September the 11th, there's still an enemy out there that would like to attack us.

And therefore, it's important for Congress to pass law and/or confirm nominees

that will enable this Government to more effectively defend the country and pursue terrorists and radicals that would like to do us harm.

So in the speech, I'm going to call upon Congress to pass funding measures for our troops in harm's way—DOD appropriations bill as well as the supplemental. I'll remind the audience that Congress has had the details of the—75 percent of the details since last February. They've had ample time to study the request. And I strongly believe they need to get these funding measures passed quickly for the sake of our troops and for the sake of the operations that are ongoing and protecting the country.

Secondly, the Protect America Act is set to expire. If it were to expire, it would create an intelligence gap that, in my judgment, would jeopardize the security of the country. I call upon—and I give credit that the Senate Intel Committee has moved a bill; that is a very good start—and that in my speech, I call upon Congress to get a good bill to my desk quickly, so that an intelligence gap does not arise.

I then remind the audience that a key member of the national security team—a key member of the team that works to protect the American people is the Attorney General. I've submitted a highly competent, smart, independent nominee in Judge Mukasey to the Senate. I am disappointed that the process is taking so long to get his name to the floor.

I believe that the questions he's been asked are unfair; he's not been read into a program—he has been asked to give opinions of a program or techniques of a program on which he has not been briefed. I will make the case—and I strongly believe this is true—that Judge Mukasey is not being treated fairly. He's made the rounds on Capitol Hill; he's answered questions; he's been to hearings. I do thank the Senate for setting up what I hope will be a opportunity to move him out of Judiciary Committee to the floor on Tuesday. It is

time to get his nomination to the floor so the Senate can vote him up or down.

And then finally, I'll conclude the speech by reminding people that this concept of stability has—in other words, that foreign policy ought to promote stability as opposed to freedom has led to dangers; and that the only way to solve America's long-term security needs is to remember that the enemy that we face can only recruit when there's hopelessness and despair; and that liberty has got the capacity to transform societies from hopeless societies to hopeful societies; and that this administration will continue to press the freedom agenda. And obviously, that freedom agenda is being tested in places like Lebanon, Iraq, and the Palestinian Territories and Afghanistan.

All those examples I've just cited are illustrative of this struggle between extremists and radicals and people who want to live in freedom.

And so that's what the speech is. I want to thank you for giving me a chance to come and share some of my thoughts about why I'm giving it to you. I'll answer a couple of questions, if you got them.

Attorney General-designate Michael B. Mukasey/U.S. Treatment of Detainees

Q. Judge Mukasey is experienced in terrorism trials; he's been around. Why is it wrong for him—or why will you not let him say whether he thinks that waterboarding is illegal torture?

The President. He has not been read in—first of all, let me put this in perspective. The Congress did pass a law, the Detainee Detention Act, that I signed into law. The techniques we use informed that law and Members of the Senate and House—select Members of the Senate and House, both parties, have been briefed on the law.

Secondly, he doesn't know whether we use that technique or not. And thirdly, it doesn't make any sense to tell an enemy what we're doing. One of the fundamental

questions that the American people have got to know is that in order to protect America, if we capture somebody who may have data about whether or not he's going to—he is ordering an attack or there's an impending attack or there's a threat, we need to know that. And the techniques we use by highly trained professionals are within the law. That's what's important for America to know.

Q. Mr. President, is legal liability in U.S. or foreign courts a concern when it comes to this issue of waterboarding and—

The President. The main concern is, is that the American people must know that whatever techniques we use are within the law. And secondly, it doesn't make any sense—unless, of course, you don't think there's an enemy that's dangerous—it doesn't make any sense to broadcast to the enemy what they ought to prepare for and not prepare for.

Q. Are these concerns legitimate that are being raised, or is it playing politics?

The President. I think it's—I think this is—I'm just extremely disappointed that a good man with a good reputation, who has met with a lot of Senators, his nomination is being held up. You can listen to the voices that are out there talking as to whether or not this is politics or not. My point is, is that it's creating a—to have the Attorney General seat vacant for this long—there's an Acting Attorney General, of course, but not to have a confirmed Attorney General is not good for the country.

Okay, what else?

Turkey

Q. On Turkey, you're going to be meeting next Monday.

The President. Yes, sir.

Q. Turkey wants the U.S. to take a lead in fighting the PKK. How are you going to—

The President. I look forward to visiting with Prime Minister Erdogan on this important subject as to how we can work together to prevent people from coming out

of mountain ranges to do harm to Turkish troops. And we will have a good, substantive discussion, as you would expect allies to do. And I'm looking forward to seeing him here in the Oval Office.

Attorney General-Designate Mukasey

Q. What do you think of the compromise proposed by McCain, Warner, and Graham on Mukasey, saying that—

The President. Mukasey just needs to get—get on the floor and get him an up-or-down vote. They've had plenty of hearings, plenty of ideas; get him out there and get him up and down.

U.S. Treatment of Detainees

Q. What is your own view about waterboarding?

The President. I'm not going to talk about techniques. There is an enemy out there. I don't want them to understand—to be able to adjust one way or the other. My view is this: The American people have got to understand the program is important and the techniques used are within the law. And Members of the House and Senate know what I'm talking about; they have been fully briefed.

War on Terror/Congress

Q. Do you think the Congress has forgotten we're at war, Mr. President?

The President. Well, I think there is a tendency for people to say, well, maybe—let me just say, there are some who say, "Don't call this a war on terror." And there are some who have accused me of using the words "war on terror" as a way to frighten people into voting booths. And I emphasize the word "some." As I'll say in this speech, those who say we're not in a war on terror are either disingenuous or naive. Either way, the attitude is dangerous, because I will have quoted the words of the enemy in the speech, an enemy that said, "We're going to come and kill you."

And I think—I'm not going to—this speech doesn't intend—this is a comprehensive speech about what Congress needs to do to make sure that we have the tools necessary and the people necessary to protect America. I will not in any way personalize this speech. I'm not going to say that an individual Member that may disagree with me is not a patriotic person. I am going to remind people, though, of the dangers that we face.

And I knew full well that if we were successful protecting the country, that the lessons of September the 11th would become dimmer and dimmer in some people's minds. Well, I just don't have that luxury and nor do the people that work

with me to protect America, because we have not forgotten the lessons of September the 11th. And I expect and the American people expect Congress to give us the tools necessary to protect them.

Okay?

Q. Thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 9:35 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey. A reporter referred to Sens. John McCain, John W. Warner, and Lindsey O. Graham. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

Remarks to the Heritage Foundation *November 1, 2007*

Thank you all. Please be seated. Thank you. Ed, thanks. Thanks for the kind introduction. I'm looking forward to working with you for the next 14 months—but you better put on your running shoes because my spirits are high, my energy level is good, and I'm sprinting to the finish line.

I congratulate you on your 30th anniversary as the president—[*laughter*]. No such thing as term limits here. [*Laughter*] And rightly so, because Ed is a person who has taken the conservative movement from one that used to meet in a phone booth here in Washington—[*laughter*—to a robust group of folks who are shaping policy in Washington, DC. As a matter of fact, you've got a little bigger phone booth these days than you did 30 years ago. [*Laughter*]

I appreciate all you've done, and I really want to thank Heritage. One of the interesting things about the Heritage legacy is that the folks here have been tireless advocates, tireless champions of liberty and free enterprise and democracy and religious freedom. These are values that came under

attack on September the 11th, 2001. Our Nation was attacked by a brutal enemy that despises freedom, that rejects tolerance, that kills the innocent in the pursuit of a dark vision. These folks believe that it's okay to subjugate women and indoctrinate children and murder those who oppose their harsh rule. They have stated clearly they want to impose this ideology on millions. They're at war with America because they hate what they stand for, and they understand we stand in their way.

And so today I've come to talk to you about the war on terror, my firm commitment that we'll do everything in our power to protect the American people, and my call on the United States Congress to give us the tools necessary so we can do the job the American people expect.

I too want to thank the members of the Heritage Foundation board of trustees who've joined us. Thank you for supporting this important organization. I can't tell you how important it is to have good centers of thought in Washington, DC—people